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IN CHRIST OR IN ADAM

OR

The Believer's Position, Privileges, and Victory.

AN EXPOSITION OF ROMANS 5:12 TO 8:39

By

I. R. Dean

Author of
"THE TIME OF THE END." "THE BIBLE AND SCIENCE."
ETC. ETC.

"But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" *(I Cor. 15:57).*

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INTRODUCTION

THE book of Romans is in four great divisions. From the beginning, after the introduction, to chapter 5:11 the book deals with **SINS** as the act of the individual, and God's method of justification. From chapter 5:12 to the end of chapter 8 it deals with **SIN** in the nature and God's way of victory and final deliverance—Sanctification. Chapters 9, 10, and 11 are parenthetical, showing that the Gospel does not abolish the covenant promises of Israel. Chapters 12 to the end deal with Christian life and service—Consecration.

I have taken up, in this little book, only the second division of the book. Two reasons may be given for this. First, because this is the part of the book that is least understood by the great body of Christians. Every real gospel preacher understands and preaches on the justification of the sinner. This is as far as many ever get. The result is that many Christians do not know that not only did Christ die **for** our sins, but that we died with Him to **sin**, to the **law**, and to the **world**.

My second reason is that I wish to set before the reader this neglected truth in such a concise way that it will appeal to him as a truth by itself and grip the renewed soul and bear fruit. Nothing but defeat can come to the child of God who stops with the fact that his sins are forgiven and believes that this is all there is to salvation. Truly this is an important part of salvation, and assures one of his ultimate destiny with the redeemed. But Paul speaks of two classes of believers, carnal and spiritual *(I Cor. 3:1; Gal. 6:1)*. Paul prays for the Ephesians that "Christ may dwell in their hearts" *(Eph. 3:17)*, and this for those already enjoying the forgiveness of sins *(Eph. 1:7)*.

Our Lord said in that upper room: "If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" *(John 14:23)*.

The life of most Christians has been a disappointment. The assurance of salvation and the joy of it was perhaps very real at the beginning; but testings came and defeat followed and then more severe testing and more inglorious defeat; until oft-times there is a resignation to such a condition as if there were no way out.

44160

Now it is in the very portion of Romans before us that God's remedy is outlined and the infallible way of victory is made plain. At the same time every objection that can be urged against it is answered.

This is the portion too that deals with the believer's relation to **law.** It will be seen that the law has the same purpose for the child of God as for the lost sinner, that is, to reveal to him his own impotency. Once this is seen no one would ever conclude that the seventh of Romans is Paul's experience in his unsaved state only. It is necessary that the believer learn that he can no more lead a holy life by keeping the law than he could lead a righteous life as a sinner in order to be saved. There would be an inexplicable blank in the book of Romans if this chapter were left out. If this were intended as the experience of Saul of Tarsus in his life as a man emerging from Pharisaism it is inserted in the wrong place. It should come somewhere in the third chapter or the fourth. But not so. Paul has told us in chapter 6 of our death to sin in being identified (judicially) with Christ's death on the cross. Also of our being made alive unto God *(6:11)*. He has also laid down the doctrine that we are not under law but under grace *(6:14)*.

He enforces these two facts by two vivid illustrations. The former is derived from the slave market, the latter from the marriage relation.

Our freedom from the dominion (not the presence) of sin has come from a change of masters *(6:18)*. Our freedom from the bondage of law has come from a change of husbands *(7:4)*.

Since this is every believer's happy position, what then? How can he now bring forth fruit unto God? Just what every other believer has tried, Paul tried. As a renewed soul, he tries to produce fruit by keeping the law, and living by it as a rule of life. Romans 7:7-24 is the inglorious result. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?"

He then learns that just as he was saved by the death of the crucified Christ, so he must **live** by the power of the risen Lord.

He learns that the flesh whether in a saved person or unsaved has one tendency and one only.

Its very law is to sin *(7:25)*.

This leads inevitably to the precious doctrines of Romans 8.

The Holy Spirit takes up for us what we cannot do for ourselves. So, that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, not by us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit *(8:4)*.

What a gap would be left in this Book of Romans then if we did not have Paul's experience in chapter 7 to show how he made the great doctrines of chapter 6 his very own. He becomes aware of the fact that he has two natures, that the flesh is just as bad as ever it was, and that as a renewed man with the flesh still with him, he is utterly powerless to do the very things that he should do. What an encouragement to the weak, fallible, defeated child of God to trace his own bitter experiences in the life of the great Apostle.

And then to see, when everything seemed lost the infallible path of victory open and accessible to every child of God. What a treasure this portion then becomes.

The Two Adams

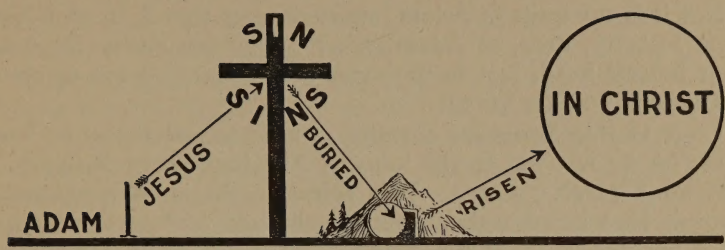

Diagram No. 1

"THEREFORE, as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned" *(Rom. 5:12)*.

In the section of Romans beginning with this verse, Paul brings out the completeness and grandeur of Christ's work by contrasting it with the work of Adam.

Without giving a reason for it, the apostle simply and positively states it as a fact that in the fall of Adam the whole human race not only inherited a sinful nature, but that we were all involved in the guilt of Adam.

"Death passed unto all men for that all sinned." That is, sinned in Adam, vicariously. Just as we read "In Adam all die" *(I Cor. 15:22)*.

Notice that Paul does not say "All have sinned." It is not true that all have sinned personally, as for example, the new born babe. But "all sinned" in the federal head, Adam. The aorist tense expresses a definite act.

This is a mystery that we cannot fathom, and yet it is no greater mystery than the imputation of the righteousness of God in Christ to which the apostle here compares it.

Is righteousness reckoned to us through Christ? so is guilt reckoned to us through Adam.

Draw a clear distinction here. It is not the sinful nature of Adam that is in question. That is certainly inherited by all the race. Genesis 5:3: "And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and

called his name Seth." From this son has come all the human race, for the other descendants of Adam were drowned in the flood.

But it is the guilt of Adam imputed to us that is in view here. "Am I guilty, then, of Adam's sin?" You are guilty IN Adam your federal head, just in the same sense that you are righteous in Christ if you are saved.

Look at this Scripture parallel. "Levi payed tithes in Abraham: for he was yet in the loins of Abraham when Melchisedec met him" *(Heb. 7:9, 10)*. This refers to the incident related in Genesis 14, when Abraham met Melchisedec as he was returning from his victory over the kings. "Abraham gave Melchisedec tithes of all" *(Gen. 14:20)*. Levi was the great grandson of Abraham and was not born till about 160 years after this event. And yet the apostle says that Levi was in Abraham and paid tithes in Abraham when he—Abraham—paid tithes to Melchisedec.

In the very same sense we were in Adam when he sinned and so we sinned in him.

Here is the illustration and proof of this doctrine. "For until the law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is a figure of Him that was to come" *(vs. 13)*. Adam sinned against a command distinctly stated. From that till Moses there was no law given and there was no individual transgression to incur the penalty of death, and yet death reigned. Why? Because of the transgression of Adam.

We must distinguish between Adam's natural headship of our race and his federal headship. As his natural descendants we partake of his sinful nature which we never lose till our bodies are "sown in corruption" *(I Cor. 15:42)*; or until Christ comes when "we shall be changed" *(I Cor. 15:51)*. That is, changed from a mortal, or death-doomed, body to an immortal body. This relationship results in our physical death.

But as our federal or representative head, Adam's act of sin may justly be reckoned as ours and so we are born dead in sin, children of wrath by nature, i. e., by our birth from Adam *(Eph. 2:1-3)*. This is the death referred to in Romans 5:12, not physical death, but spiritual separation from God. Thus it

will be seen that both kinds of death come from Adam, i. e., natural and spiritual death.

This naturally raises the question of infant salvation. If the entire race are constituted sinners in Adam how can babies who are incapable of believing the Gospel be saved?

It is wrong to speculate where there is no revelation, but I believe we have a Scripture ground for saying that every baby dying before it reaches the years of accountability is saved.

Look at the diagram (No. 1). The black line at the bottom represents all the race as sinners in Adam. Christ was an offering for sin in two respects, as indicated by the types in Leviticus and explained in the doctrinal statements of the New Testament.

I. HE WAS THE SIN OFFERING.

This shows what we ARE in Adam. "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" *(II Cor. 5:21)*.

Christ did not descend by natural generation from Adam, and therefore He was not involved in Adam's sin. At the cross He identified Himself with our sin. "He was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners," before that.

Now as the infant has not committed any sins of its own but is only guilty in Adam, Christ who was not guilty in Adam but was made sin for us at the cross, was that "Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world" *(John 1:29)*.

Dr. Chas. Hodge says on this question, "If without personal participation in the sin of Adam, all men are subject to death, may we not hope that without personal acceptance of the righteousness of Christ, all who die in infancy are saved?"—*Commentary on Romans in Loco.*

It is not, then, because infants are not guilty in Adam that they are saved, but because Christ has borne the penalty of Adam in being made sin for them.

This gives a just ground for the salvation of every infant that dies in infancy even in heathendom and may not this be the way in which God gets His quota from the unevangelized parts of the earth?

II. HE WAS THE TRESPASS OFFERING.

"Who His own self bare our sins in His own body upon the tree that we having died unto sins, might live into righteousness."

This refers to what we have done. SIN is what we are in Adam. Sins are what we do ourselves. Sin is the tree, sins are the fruit. The cross answers to the first, the Blood to the second.

People that come to the years of accountability have sins. So Paul can say "There is no difference, for all have sinned (all grown-up people) and come short of the glory of God. Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, **through faith,** in His Blood, to show His righteousness because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God; for the showing, I say, of His righteousness at this present season: that He might be just and the justifier of him that **believeth** in Jesus" *(Rom. 3:22-26).*

Here we have the Old Testament believers and believers since the cross, all justified through faith in the Blood. But the reader will see that in this case it is the question of SINS and not SIN.

Having thus cleared the ground we can proceed with the chapter. It will be noticed that Paul sees

TWO MEN. TWO ACTS. TWO RESULTS—5:15-19.

Adam, Sin, Death. Christ, Righteousness, Life. "But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the **one** man, Jesus Christ abound unto the many."

"The many" that died here means **all mankind.** Just as in verse 12 "all sinned" in Adam so all died in him.

But notice the respect in which the recovery exceeds the ruin. Not in the numbers affected; but in respect of the quality of the blessing bestowed. The Lord merely let the law take its course in the fall; but the grace of God is His positive favor resulting in

a glorious and eternal reversal of the previous ruin: and more than a reversal, because it brings with it the exaltation of those in Christ Jesus, the last Adam.

"And not as it was by one that sinned so is the gift; for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. For if by one man's offence death reigned by one: much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ" *(16, 17)*.

There is no difficulty in understanding these statements.

One man's one sin brought the sentence and execution of death on all the human race.

One man's one act of righteousness brought life and "much more," the reign of justified men over death in glory; and this glorious reversal of the sentence is not against one offence but "many offences" of the many.

"Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so through one act of righteousness the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." In this and the following verse we have the summing up of the argument on the parallel between Adam and Christ. **BY THE OFFENCE OF ONE? OR BY ONE OFFENCE JUDGMENT CAME UPON ALL MEN TO CONDEMNATION.** Here there is no exception. Every descendant of Adam is included, because he is the federal head of the entire race. Just as our Lord said, "He that believeth not is condemned already" *(John 3:18)*.

We were born into a condemned race. It is not by our own acts that we are there, but by the act of our federal head. It is necessary to have clear ideas about this in order to understand the arguments that follow in chapters 6, 7 and 8.

It is also very important to accept fully this statement of our fearful ruin in order that we may be clear about our salvation and the way of victory in the Christian life. If we are already under sentence of condemnation when we are born apart from any act of our own, then certainly no act of our own can bring us out of this condition. But what about the "all men" of the closing statement? This is to be taken with a limit, meaning all connected with the last Adam. It could mean that justification is offered to all potentially. But Paul is dealing here with facts

and results and not abstract theories. The following diagram will represent this to the eye.

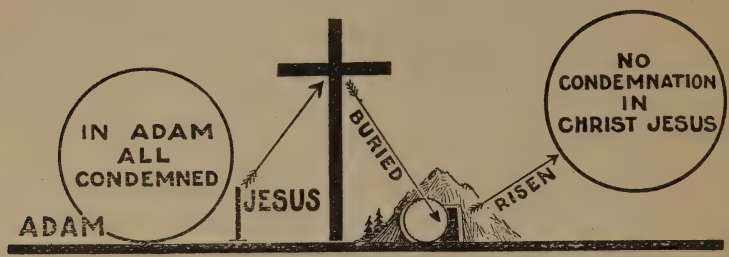

Diagram No. 2

If Adam brings condemnation and death in fact upon all concerned, Christ Jesus must bring life and acquittal in fact upon all concerned also.

Christ is not the Head of all men in the sense spoken of here, but only the Head of the justified, those born again. Each "all" in this verse is universal of the class referred to. Not one of those born **in Adam** but is condemned and dead. Not one of those **in Christ** but is justified and in possession of eternal life.

"For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One shall the many be made righteous" This does not speak of a moral change but a legal standing. We were constituted sinners, vicariously by the disobedience of Adam. Please notice that it is not an inherited sinful nature that is in view here but actual guilt. Paul does not say that we were made "sinful," but "made sinners." He wants to emphasize the vicarious and unique work of the Last Adam, and to show that our justification results **wholly** from Him.

In Adam "the many," i. e., the whole human race, became in the eyes of the law guilty. In Christ "the many," i. e., all believers, become in the eyes of the law righteous.

Obedience here refers to His dying on the cross in our behalf where He "became obedient unto death" *(Phil. 2:8)*. We may present here in a tabular form our relation to the Two Adams.

Those Represented in Adam	Those Represented in Christ
1. Sin imputed.	1. Righteousness imputed.
2. Treated as though sinners.	2. Treated as though righteous.
3. Not thus personally sinners.	3. Not thus personally righteous.
4. But only sinners representatively.	4. But only righteous representatively.
5. Though not thus personally sinners in Adam, yet born sinful, and naturally becoming sinners.	5. Though not thus personally holy in Christ, yet born again unto holiness, and growing in grace by the working of the Holy Spirit.
6. Condemned to all the penalties of death because of Adam's sin.	6. Released from penalty, and receiving eternal life because of Christ's obedience.
7. Voluntarily accepting the relation to Adam, and persevering in the life of sin inaugurated by him.	7. Voluntarily, though by God's help and grace accepting Christ and co operating with Him in living out His life in us.

THE LAW AND ITS PURPOSE—5:20, 21.

"Moreover the law came in besides that the offence might abound: but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."

Here we have a new thing, independent of the line of the preceding verses. But it is meant to magnify the abounding grace of God, and to bring out the fact that we are not only guilty "in Adam" but **personally** guilty.

The law cannot disannul the covenant of grace. "And this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ the LAW, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect" *(Gal. 3:17)*.

"Wherefore then serveth the law?" This question the apostle answers in Romans and Galatians in almost the same language.

It is not raised formally in Romans, but it is met as an objection naturally arising out of his argument. The law came in as an after thought to speak after the manner of men, "to the end that the offence might abound." That the disease might be brought to the surface. That the offence might become a transgression.

In a town when it is new, there is no law against riding a horse on the sidewalks. Later a law is passed with a penalty attached. It is just as dangerous to foot passengers and just as injurious to the walk before the law was passed as afterwards. But while it was an offense before, it becomes a **trangression now.** So sin was in the world before the law was given, but it was not a transgression.

In Galatians, to the question, "Wherefore then serveth the law?" the answer is, "It was added for the sake of defining sin" *(Weymouth).*

The law does not create sin any more than a light brought into a dusty room creates the dust. The law cannot remove sin any more than sunlight can remove dirt. But here is the mighty power that can remove sin and does remove it. "But where sin abounded grace did **much more** abound."

Five times in our English version (five is the number of grace) we meet this expression "much more" to show what we get in Christ more than we lost in Adam. We will not detain the reader by a discussion of them, but they are worthy of our study. See verses 9, 10, 15, 17, 20. No one can be too big a sinner for Christ to save, because it is all of grace. "Where sin abounds grace **much more** abounds; and whereas sin reigned unto death, grace reigns through righteousness unto **eternal life** through Jesus Christ our Lord."

DOES THIS ETERNAL SECURITY LEAD TO SIN?—6:1-11.

Paul anticipates the Objection which is abundantly illustrated in Church History. "If we are saved forever by grace, then we can sin as we please." "Therefore we will continue in sin that grace may abound." In answering this objection let it be noted that Paul meets it not by modifying in the least his former statements about justification being free and once for all. A holy life with the apostle is always the effect of justification never the cause of it.

The question of merit is entirely outside the subject.

Let us look at some of the characteristics of justification as outlined by the apostle.

I. JUSTIFICATION IS AN IMMEDIATE GIFT.

It is not an attainment, but an obtainment. It is once for all.

II. THERE ARE NO DEGREES IN JUSTIFICATION.

From the moment of conversion to the end of earthly life justification is absolutely the same. The believer may need to be forgiven as a child of the Father; but he can never be again as a criminal before the Judge. Justification is the act of a judge, forgiveness is the act of a parent.

III. JUSTIFICATION IS THEREFORE A PERMANENT GIFT.

It covers the past, present and future. The sin question between the soul and God is forever settled. We may be a disobedient child and therefore need the Father's chastening rod, but we can never be an alien sinner facing the condemnation of the judge.

IV. JUSTIFICATION IS A DIVINE GIFT.

"It is God that justifies," not our faithfulness. Salvation does not rest in human strength or human merit.

V. JUSTIFICATION IS A GIFT TO BE ENJOYED.

"We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the reconciliation" *(Rom. 5:11)*.

Since these things are so, What then? "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?"

This question would never be raised if this were not the Divine way of salvation. Who would ever ask such a question if the believer were still under the law and depending on his good life for salvation.

"We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?" The reference is to a single act; **THE DEATH OF CHRIST**, at which every believer regarded as "in Him" died to sin.

This is more than substitution. It is identification. **It is not an experience we go through ourselves.** It is a **fact** received by faith that God reckoned us as bound up with Christ in the same bundle of life at the cross and that whatever He did is reckoned as if we did it.

Nothing but darkness can result from the Christian trying to find in his own experience some time when he died to sin. This is not true at all. Nor does the apostle mean that when we enter by faith into this blessed fact that the sinful nature in us is eradicated. This verse does not refer to any moral change in us at all, but simply to our judicial standing. Get this clear, dear reader, if you would be clear on all that follows. Many talk of this, as if it were some peculiar feeling that came over them when bowed in consecration, or even some period of unconsciousness when deeply convicted of sin.

But let it be remembered that every blessing comes to us through the cross, and there, **there, THERE** is where God wants us to look and not at our experiences. *(See Diagram No. 1.)*

THE PLACE AND MEANING OF BAPTISM

This is what is taught in your baptism. It is the symbol of your union with Christ in His death and burial and resurrection. God looks at you as having passed through all these experiences with Christ, and He wants you to publish this fact in symbol in your baptism.

"If we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection." How beautifully the two ordinances of the Christian Church tell the whole Gospel. "Christ died for our sins." That is the Lord's Supper in symbol. The broken body, the shed Blood in the loaf and in the cup. That is one-half the Gospel that we are all agreed on.

But the other half, equally precious is that "Christ was buried and rose again." This is Baptism in symbol. It was never deferred in the early disciples. It was never treated as a matter of indifference. Nothing manifested their break with heathenism like this open confession of their belief in a buried and risen Saviour. It is the same in the heathen world to-day. One can be a quiet believer in Christ and be free from persecution, but

let him come out and boldly declare his belief in the symbol of death to the old regime and a new life in Christ and the break becomes complete.

Burial is the final token of death, and so the strongest expression of death as a fact.

It seems clear that this means immersion as a quasi-burial; and the significance of the rite depends on this form of it. It thus lays the Christian in the grave with the Lord, where He lay as the slain Propitiation.

It ratifies our share in the justification of the cross and also in His risen life.

This deliverance from sin does not make us want to live in sin as before our conversion but "we walk in newness of life."

There is a clear transition of ideas here in respect to our "death to sin" and the "newness of life." Our death to sin was judicial and freed us from penalty, whereas "the life" is a new principle, a real partaking of the Divine nature resulting in new acts.

"Knowing this that our old man was crucified with Him that the body of sin might be done away (annulled), that we should be no longer in bondage to sin." This is one of the great verses of the Bible and deserves our careful study.

"Our old man" means our old self before the new birth. So different is the Christian's position before God prior to his union with Christ that he is viewed as another person.

But when were we crucified? In some marvelous experience of self-surrender, and consequent liberty and joy? Oh no, but in our Representative and Head, the last Adam, Jesus Christ, when **He was crucified.** We must look back past all experiences to the ground of our faith, the Man on the cross. This makes our peace permanent because it in no way depends upon the fluctuations of our feelings. Does it not read "Was crucified **with Him?"** Then it cannot mean something that took place in our experience, but a blessed fact appropriated by faith.

"That the body of sin might be annulled."

By the "Body of sin" here the apostle means the same as he does by "sin" throughout the rest of this and the following chapter. That is, the sinful nature in every child of the first Adam, personified as the old self-life before the new birth.

But what becomes of it? Is it eradicated when we are born

again or when we come into the experience of a deeper spiritual life? Many good men and women believe and teach that it is. This conclusion is drawn from the expression in our Authorized Version "That the body of sin might be destroyed."

Let us look then at the real meaning and use of this word. ("Katargeo.") It is used 27 times in the New Testament and in no case does it ever mean annihilation, or the blotting out of existence.

Its first occurrence is in Luke 13:7, where it is said of the unfruitful fig tree "Why **cumbereth** it the ground?" Now the ground is not annihilated by the fig tree, but it is hampered by it and prevented from bearing its natural fruitage. So our old man was crucified that "sin" might be **hampered, cumbered, dethroned**; "that we should no longer be in bondage to sin." The very form of expression here shows that "sin" still exists, but that it is no longer Master.

The next occurrence of the word is in Romans 3:3, "Shall their unbelief **make** the faith of God **without effect?"** Here the thought is not of annihilation but simply of making faith ineffectual.

The last occurrence is in Hebrews 2:14. "Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same that through death He might **DESTROY** him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."

This certainly cannot mean the annihilation of the devil. The Revised Version translates "bring to nought," which means that Satan's power is under the absolute control of our risen Saviour, and not that he is blotted out of existence. Sin then has been taken off the throne in every born again person and is not the master any longer, as it was before. "For he that hath died is freed from sin."

Not freed from its existence in his body but freed from its penalty and from its dominion.

It is interesting to notice how the apostle passes from **justification**, which means an acquittal in respect to sins past, present, and future, to **sanctification** which means our translation into a new position, and with a new life fitting us for that position *(Col. 1:12)*.

"Verse 7 may be paraphrased: For He who has once died to sin now stands free from its claims. The **legal claim** of sin is

meant here, not its **moral** dominion, for the word rendered 'freed' is literally **justified.** See margin. The argument is that, since death is the penalty of sin, then if death has been suffered and **passed,** the penalty is exhausted and the claim cancelled. Now such is the position of the justified in Christ; His death **was endured, and is now past, for them and as theirs;** therefore they live as those who have exhausted penalty and are free from its claims—in fact, justified from sin."—*Bishop Moule.*

In the verses that follow we have the same thought carried forward with special reference to the new resurrection life of our Lord which becomes our life since we are quickened together with Him. This life is "unto God" and therefore cannot be unto sin.

Let us look at the whole short paragraph together. "But if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him; knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For the death that He died, He died unto sin once (for all): but the life that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Even so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus."

There is no difficulty in understanding this if we bear in mind our identification with Christ in His death, in His burial and in His resurrection. *(See Diagram No. 1.)*

When the apostle says, "But if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him;" he does not refer to our bodily resurrection in glory, in the future; but from the moment we believe and are born again we **live** and shall continue to do so in all the future. This is clear from the verses that follow.

God does not ask us to "reckon" a thing to be true in order to make it true, but to **reckon** it so because it **IS** so. Christ died unto sin once for all, you died **with** Him. Christ ever liveth unto God, you live **in** Him, therefore reckon it so.

This is another of the great verses of the Bible. It would save us a lot of trouble if we obeyed the injunction. We may very appropriately pause here to summarize.

THE POSITION OF THE BELIEVER IN CHRIST

1. EVERY STATEMENT ABOUT THE BELIEVER'S POSITION IS A DIVINE DECREE.

"There is therefore **now** no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus" *(Rom. 8:1)*.

"He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin that we might be made the rigteousness of God in Him" *(II Cor. 5:21)*.

II. THE BELIEVER'S POSITION IS PERFECT BECAUSE IT DEPENDS ONLY ON CHRIST.

"For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified" *(Heb. 10:14)*, i. e., that are set apart for God by the new birth.

III. THE BELIEVER'S POSITION IS NOT AN EXPERIENCE BUT A FACT.

A deed is evidence of ownership not the joy that results from it. "Our old man was crucified with Him," does not refer to some sudden or gradual physical experience that we passed through ourselves, but the crucifixion of Christ appropriated by faith.

IV. THE BELIEVER'S POSITION IS NOT PROGRESSIVE BUT FIXED.

Sonship is a fixed relation. The moment we are born of God we become His children. We are never more or less His children from that moment forever after.

"The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God; and if children then heirs" *(Rom. 8:16, 17)*.

"And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son" *(Gal. 4:6, 7)*.

Justification is the same, it admits of no degrees because it depends alone on the perfect redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

Sanctification (positionally) is also fixed. Every believer is

eternally set apart for God, "By the offering of the Body of Jesus Christ once for all" *(Heb. 10:9, 10)*.

In this sense all believers are saints or sanctified the moment they believe on Christ. They are taken out of the first Adam and united to the last Adam. "By one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, Whereof the Holy Spirit also is a witness to us" *(Heb. 10:14, 15)*.

Growth in grace and knowledge is progressive and causes the believer to separate himself more and more from evil but this comes of the fact that at his new birth he was "created in righteousness and true holiness" *(Eph. 4:24)*.

V. THE POSITION OF EACH BELIEVER IS THE BIRTHRIGHT OF ALL OTHER BELIEVERS.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ" *(Eph. 1:3)*.

If one believer is rejoicing in a life of peace and victory and another is not; it is not because the former has entered into a second work of grace and the other has not, but because the other is not enjoying the boundless grace that is his already. The well-known, but usually misquoted passage in Joshua 1:3 will make this clear. "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon that **HAVE I GIVEN** (not will I give) unto you." That is, it is yours whether you appropriate it or not. But, certainly, you will not enjoy it unless you appropriate it.

Take all the expressions in chapters 6 and 7 of Romans about the believer's position and it will be seen that they include the whole family.

"WE who died to sin."

"**Our** old man was crucified with **Him.**"

"My brethren **YE ALSO** are made dead to the law."

"Risen with Him."

"Alive unto God in Christ Jesus."

It is absolutely unscriptural to divide up the family of God, and to say that some of them have these blessings and others have not. All we have to do is to "possess our possession."

OUR DELIVERANCE FROM THE DOMINION OF SIN 6:12-14.

"Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey the lusts thereof; neither present your members unto sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves unto God, as alive from the dead and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under law, but under grace." Here we have the first appeal to the will of the new-born soul. He has given us the Divine motive and basis of a holy life; and now on this ground "Let not sin reign in your mortal body." This imples that "sin" is still in the mortal body, of the justified. But sin has been dethroned and is no longer to be the master. The believer is judicially free from its claims or its doom; but not free from its existence as we will see more fully in chaper 7.

The believer also has "newness of life unto God," with new affections and motives and has been brought into fellowship with God. His will is now set free and he can choose between sin and righteousness. The unrenewed sinner has a free-will, of course, but only within the limits of the natural man. His will is free in the sense that a vulture's will is free. A vulture is at liberty to eat grain and clean food, but its nature does not permit of it. It would starve to death in a wheat field, because its nature is averse to such food. Just as the sinner is free to obey God's law, but his nature is absolutely averse to it. "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" *(Rom. 8:7)*. Notwithstanding his will is free it can only move within the limits of this carnal mind. He is in bondage in spite of all his boasted liberty. The Lord says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, whosoever practices sin (i. e., lives in it as his natural atmosphere) is the bond-slave of sin" *(John 8:34)*.

"And ye shall **KNOW** the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free." "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" *(John 8:32, 36)*.

This is the very position Paul has brought us into in the Book of Romans. Being free now, we can do with our members as we please. There is no compulsion, but there is a gentle appeal.

"Neither present your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin." The members of our body are the vehicle through which **SIN** did its evil work. That was our master in our unregenerate state. The will, the affections, the whole personality were its slave.

But now the will is free and can act for God. So we are told to "**Present** ourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead and our members as instruments of righteousness unto God."

All our blessings are spoken of as already ours in Christ.

We have died to sin. We have been crucified with Him.

We are alive unto God. Therefore, we are to reckon on God's **facts** and act according to these **facts.**

"For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under law but under grace."

Law has its field of operation and its use up to the cross, but not after.

Law and grace are exactly opposite in principle and cannot possibly be the motive for action in the same person at the same time.

Law demands.
Grace supplies.
Law gives knowledge of sin.
Grace justifies from all sin.
Law says "Do and live."
Grace says "Live and do."
Law says "Pay me what thou owest."
Grace says "The gift of God is eternal life."
Law reveals the disease.
Grace provides the remedy.
Law says "Come not nigh."
Grace makes us nigh through the Blood.
Law makes the offense abound. But where sin abounds,
Grace much more abounds.

What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? God forbid. Let it be stated again that no other doctrine except that expressed in the plain words of these verses

would ever call forth the objection suggested here. If Paul had meant that the believer is under law in any sense no one would raise the suspicion that this is a dangerous doctrine, and leads to sin. Besides, the apostle could easily have modified his language and said "But let me explain, I did not mean that the child of God is absolutely free from the law, but only for **salvation.** The law is still over him as a **rule of life** and the only way he is free from it is by not breaking it."

But such is not his answer. He reaffirms his position by showing our deliverance from sin unto

ANOTHER MASTER

He uses the figure of a bond-slave for which he apologizes in verse 19. **SIN** was our old master when we were under law. **OBEDIENCE** is personified as our new master. Bond-service once accepted becomes binding and forbids divided service.

This is as true of our new position in justification as it was of our old position in condemnation. Having passed from one master to another, you are bound to obey as much as ever, but in the opposite direction.

"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves as bond-servants unto obedience, his bond-servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But thanks be to God, that, whereas ye were bond-servants of sin, ye became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered; and being made free from sin, ye became bond-servants of righteousness."

Notice that our new master is first called Obedience, and then Righteousness, and then God *(vss. 16, 18, 22)*.

"Free from sin" does not mean that sin is eradicated, but that it is deposed as our Master. It is no longer in control since "we died to sin," and became united to Christ in this new life. It is not said that sin died, but **we** died to **it.** To say that a slave has been sold from one owner to another does not mean that the former owner has ceased to exist, but that he has lost the mastery.

"I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh."

This is Paul's apology for descending to the slave market, with which they were all familiar, to teach such a profound spiritual truth. It is a low metaphor, indeed, to speak of our state of justification as one of slavery. But it is necessary to convey the full reality of the obligation to our minds.

According to this argument a soul is never free. There is no middle ground between bond slavery to sin and bond slavery to righteousness, i. e., to our Lord Jesus Christ Who is our righteousness.

Paul loves to call himself a bond-slave of Jesus Christ *(see Rom. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Titus 1:1)*. And why not? That is real liberty, to be the property of such a master.

Did it ever occur to you that the happiest person in the world is a slave of a rich master who dearly and truly loves him? He need not worry about the drought or the rain. He does not have to provide food or clothing. It matters not to him whether business is prosperous or otherwise. His master is looking after that. This was the feeling of David when he said: "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want."

And the Lord says of His Blood-bought bond-servants, "Henceforth I call you not bond-servants; for the bond-servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you **friends**; for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you" *(John 15:15)*.

The Christian is His Lord's bond-servant as purchased, and as self surrendered. And since we have been bought from under such a cruel master into the ownership of such a good Master; how great is our obligation!

Does He not say "And ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free? If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

So that while He has a right to us as **slaves**, He takes us to His bosom as **friends** and sets us free. This is the only true liberty in this world.

It is not necessary to go into detail for the rest of this chapter. It is too plain to need any exposition.

Our old life before regeneration is contrasted with our new life in Christ. We were free from righteousness in our old state.

That does not mean that righteousness did not exist, but that it was not our master.

But now we have been made free from sin. This does not mean that sin does not still exist in our members, but it is no longer our master. We are free from its dominion, not free from its existence. It is impossible to follow Paul's argument here if you read into it the unscriptural doctrine of eradication of the sinful nature.

It is when we enter this new life that the warfare really begins. This we will see in chapter 7.

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Not the **punishment** of sin is death, but the **wages**. Much harm has come from confounding two things that are entirely different.

A man is hired by a gang of thieves to assist in robbing a house. The plan is carried out and he gets his pay. That is the wages of his sin. But he is arrested by an officer of the law and sent to prison for two years. That is the punishment of his sin.

Or if that illustration is not suited to the case take this one. A man in a drunken bout smashes a plate glass window with his fist. The glass cuts his arm so that he has to be under the doctor's care for weeks. That is his wages for his sin; and he might argue as many do that he has had all the punishment he deserves or will ever get. But the judge does not see it that way. He lays a fine on him of $100 or six months in jail. That is the punishment of his sin. Death in its most awful sense of separation from God, is no more than the reward and result of sin. But there is something more than that. "After **THIS** the judgment" *(Heb. 9:27)*.

ANOTHER HUSBAND—7:1-6.

"Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man, as long as he liveth." By an entirely new simile, that of marriage, we have illustrated for the third time the Christian's entire disconnection from the claims of sin; and so from its ruling influence by virtue of his new union with Christ. As the strength of sin is

the law, it is our absolute severance from the law that is especially in view here.

"The law has dominion over a man for so long time as he liveth." Then the one way to get out from under the law is to die. Death alone can cancel its abiding claim.

There is another way to get out from under the law of a country, and that is to move away from its dominion.

But it is impossible to move away from God's dominion and it is God's law that is in question here.

You can settle the question at once then whether you are under the law or not. Have you died to it? *(vs. 4)*. That is, died in the death of your federal head, Jesus Christ. Paul never loses sight of the two headships in his argument through chapters 6, 7 and 8.

"I through the law died to the law" *(Gal. 2:19)*.

This is not an experience, but a fact, appropriated by faith. A happy feeling of joy and liberty may flow from the realization of this fact. But never confound this feeling in yourself with your death to the law in the death of Christ on the cross.

Take the case of marriage. "The woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of the husband. So then if while her husband liveth she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband be dead she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress though she be married to another Man." The meaning of this illustration is very clear, though the commentators differ widely in their application of it.

The simplest way is to consider

The believer as the woman.
The law is the first husband.
Christ is the second husband.

The difficulty lies in the fact that the **LAW** did not die. But **WE** died to the law, and so the separation is by death and amounts to the same thing.

There has been an absolute break between us and the law at the cross.

"Wherefore my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law

by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, being dead to that wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of Spirit, and not in oldness of the letter" *(Rom. 7:4-6)*.

The leading doctrine of this section is that taught in 6:14, "Ye are not under law but under grace." And that the result of this freedom is not indulgence of sin, but the service of God.

This deliverance from the law is not effected by setting the law aside, or by disregarding its demands, or by lowering its standard; but by all its claims satisfied in the person of Christ, in His death at the cross.

Our redemption is in order to holiness. We are delivered from the law that we may be united to Christ, and we are united to Christ that we may bring forth fruit unto God. Legal or self-righteous strivings after holiness can never be successful. Regeneration is a deliverance from this legal and slavish state to one of filial confidence.

Notice how the figure of marriage in verse 6 gives way to that of bond-service once more. But it is the obedience of a wife beloved, now, not that of a slave.

This figure of a wife is enlarged on in Ephesians 5, "Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord." "Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself for it." Obedience to such a husband is not bondage but liberty and a glorious privilege.

THE TRUE FUNCTION OF LAW—7:7-25.

Paul, having shown in chapters 3 and 4 that deliverance from the law is necessary to our **justification**; and in 6 and 7:1-6 that this freedom is no less necessary to our **sanctification**, now comes to explain more fully what is the use and effect of law.

The discussion about whether this represents Paul in his justified state or before is altogether beside the question. It undoubtedly takes in both states. "By the law is the knowledge of sin." This is true of saved sinners as well as unsaved sinners.

The law is as powerless in producing holiness in a believer as it is in producing righteousness in a lost sinner. If any difference, it is harder for Christians to learn this truth than it is for lost sinners. And this is the reason why there is so little victory in the lives of Christians.

A room is full of poisonous serpents. You cannot see them, nor smell them, nor hear them, and you are unconscious of their presence. A light is brought in. Now your whole thought is how to get out of the way. The light did not put those serpents there, and the light cannot take them away; it simply shows they are there.

"What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay I had not known sin, but by the law; for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment deceived me, and by it slew me. Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful."

This section, no doubt, refers to Paul's experience before, and at the time of his conversion. That certain outward actions were wrong, he and all other Pharisees knew, and were ready to admit; but that God took notice of the secrets of the heart, and even of its disposition they were deplorably ignorant. This was the condition of the apostle when he could say of himself, "Touching the righteousness which is in the law blameless" *(Phil. 3:6)*.

He was at peace with himself; unaware of the dreadful opposition of his heart to the nature and requirements of God.

"Without the law sin was dead." That is, it was inactive and unobserved. But when he saw the holy and spiritual character of the law it had two effects. It excited his evil passions and it discovered them to him. "Sin revived and I died." That

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is, I became miserable; because self-satisfaction and the sense of security fled before the sight of the law. Throughout this section, it is to be noticed that Paul attributes to the law, not only the knowledge of sin, but the excitement of it. It produces "the motions of sin," of sinful desire *(vs. 9)*; it seduces into sin *(vs. 11)*.

But this is not at all, because the law is wrong in itself, but because of the flesh through which it has to operate. The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. The law is in every way excellent. Our own corruption is the real source of all the evil.

The enormity of sin is made conspicuous by the law, inasmuch as sin makes even that which is in itself good a source of evil.

The law is good, but it is not good for our justification, nor for our sanctification. John Ploughman said, "A handsaw is a good thing, but it is not good to shave with."

From the 14th verse Paul begins to show the effect of the law on the believer, in giving his own experience after he was saved. This is clear because he uses the first person and the present tense throughout the passage. "I consent unto the law that it is good;" "O wretched man that I am;" "So then I myself serve the law of God."

This makes this section of this wonderful Book of Romans one of the most suggestive and practical portions in it.

The lesson that Paul learned here is the lesson that every child of God needs to learn to lead a life of victory in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Can the renewed man so fulfil the law of God as to lead a holy life? Can he achieve victory over sin by the strength of his resolution, or by any resources within himself?

Paul learned, and the lesson is for us all, that the believer although he has a quickened spirit, made alive in Christ has no more power to lead a life of holiness than a sinner has to lead a life of righteousness.

Place a glass tumbler beside an electric bulb in perfect working order. The electric bulb has no more power to shine of itself than the tumbler; but it has the conditions of shining which

the tumbler has not. It has a tungsten wire in it, and it is connected with the power house by a conducting medium; all that is necessary is to turn the switch and it gives a brilliant light. But the light is not of itself, but of a power outside itself. So it is with us. We have been brought into fellowship with God through the Blood; our own human spirit has been quickened into life. We have an unbroken connection with the power house; but the power is of God and not of us.

Paul like every other Christian tried, at first, to live this holy victorious life in his own strength. He was so happy in his new-found liberty that he thought he would never sin any more. Probably he believed like many other mistaken souls that indwelling sin was entirely eradicated. It is a natural feeling to the newly born again soul, treading the path of a new experience.

But he soon learned better.

"For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin." The figure is from the slave market as in chapter 6. But he is redeemed and regenerate now, and the slavery is limited. As regards its **claims to condemnation,** he is free from sin; as to its **influence** and **temptation,** he is still liable. And such is his view of holiness now, that the least yielding to indwelling sin is a heavy bondage. The "I" of this verse is the old self life, and if you ask, "When was he sold?" the answer is "at the fall of Adam," in the federal head.

The apostle awakes to the fact that he now has

TWO NATURES

"For that which I do I allow not; for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but **SIN** that dwelleth in me."

This is certainly the conflict of a regenerate soul. The apostle's **WILL** is entirely on the side of the law. He hates the very thing that he does, and takes God's side against himself. This no unregenerate soul does. The "I" here is clearly the new man, the regenerate self. The Greek is literally, "But now no longer I do it." The "no longer" implies a different previous state. It was once my true self that worked the will of sin, it is no longer my true self.

"For I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing. For to will is present with me, but to do that which is good is not."

"The flesh" here is the unregenerate man before his conversion and since he has been made a partaker of the Divine nature it is the still-abiding tendency to evil. Paul is careful not to say that in his whole being there was no good thing dwelling. For the Holy Spirit dwelt in his quickened spirit *(Rom. 8:9)*. It may help us in the study of this section to glance through the New Testament at

I. THE NAMES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE OLD NATURE.

1. "The Flesh" *(John 3:6)*. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." Concerning this flesh, we are told:

It "cannot please God" *(Rom. 8:8)*.

It "profiteth nothing" *(John 6:63)*.

There is in it "no good thing" *(Rom. 7:18)*.

2. **"The Natural Man."**

We are told "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishnness unto him, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned" *(I Cor. 2:14)*.

3. **"The Old Man."**

We are told that "He is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts" *(Eph. 4:22)*.

4. **"The Outward Man."**

We are told that "He perishes day by day." Which means that as long as we are in the body we have this burden.

5. **"The Heart."** "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies" *(Matt. 15:19)*. Many talk about "a change of heart;" but this is not Scriptural. We must be created (new) in Christ Jesus *(Eph. 2:10)*.

Evangelists that are well-taught in the Word speak of "giving your heart to God." As if a lost sinner would give his heart to God; and if he did what would God want with such a heart as

that? God is the giver of a divine nature and eternal life *(II Peter 1:4)*.

6. **"The Carnal Mind."**

We are told "The carnal mind is emity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" *(Rom. 8:7)*.

7. **Sin.**

Distinguish between "Sin," and "Sins." "Sin" is the tree. "Sins" are the fruit.

In Romans from 1:16—5:11 it is sins considered as the outcome of the old nature, that are dealt with. We are shown how God can be just and the justifier of the believing sinner.

From Romans 5:12—8:39 it is "Sin," the old nature itself that is dealt with.

It will be seen that "The Blood" answers to "Sins," and "The Cross" answers to "Sin" or the old nature. Compare Romans 3: 25, 26 with Romans 6:6.

II. THE NAMES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEW NATURE.

1. It is called "Spirit."

"That which is born of the Spirit is spirit" *(John 3:6)*.

2. It is called the "Divine Nature" *(II Peter 1:4)*.

Hence it is said, "Every one that is begotten of God does not practice sin (as his fruit), because His seed (the new nature) abideth in him; and he (the new man) cannot sin, because he has been begotten of God" *(I John 3:9)*. This new nature is personified and spoken of in the masculine gender. It cannot refer to the believer as a whole; for, "If we say we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us" *(I John 1:10)*.

3. The New Man.

This is in contrast with the "old man." This is called a "new creation" *(II Cor. 5:17)*.

4. The Inward Man *(Rom. 7:22; II Cor. 4:16; Eph. 3:16)*.

This is in contrast with the outward man which perishes day by day, while the inward man is renewed "day by day." The inward man delights in the law of God, while the flesh "is not subject to the law of God" *(Rom. 7:22)*. Compare Romans 8:7.

5. The Mind.

This "mind" serves the law of God and delights in it *(Rom. 7:22, 25)*.

In every regenerate person, then, there are two opposite forces working: "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would" *(Gal. 5:17)*.

It will be noted that Paul says nothing through this section concerning the Holy Spirit. It was an effort of his own to live a holy life, now, that he has been born again, and it is a sad failure.

"For the good that I would that I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not; it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me."

The renewed will struggles to do the right thing, but the flesh is too strong for him.

"I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." Surely these statements cannot refer to an unregenerate man.

The literal reading of verse 22 is "I delight with the law of God after the inward man." The law's loves and hatreds are those of the soul. Just as he says, "Rejoiceth with the truth" *(I Cor. 13:6)*. The word law is used in Greek as in English in different senses. It may mean a moral code, laid down to be observed; it may mean a statement of observed facts. When Paul says "I see another law in my members:" he does not refer to some commandments; but to a force acting in a uniform way. In this case an evil force, called "the law of sin."

"O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?"

The body is that part of the regenerate man that is still "dead because of sin" *(Rom. 8:10)*. When it is changed and made like unto His glorious body then we will be free from the presence of sin forever. It is from this that the apostle longs for deliverance.

But so far, the struggle has been carried on entirely by himself, apparently without any conception that Christ must deliver from the power of sin as well as from its penalty; and like a drowning man he goes down in defeat.

That some should contend that Paul is describing his unconverted state up to this point—seems to me most unreasonable. The arguments of Dr. Chas Hodge, one of the ablest theologians of modern times, on this point are unanswerable.

"There is nothing in this passage inconsistent with the experience of the holiest of men. The inward conflict here described every Christian understands and experiences. The passage contains many declarations inconsistent with the Scriptural account of unrenewed men. The Bible does not speak of unrenewed men as consenting unto the law, as hating sin, and struggling against it, groaning under it as a tyrant's yoke, as delighting in the law of God, and doing this as to the inward or new man. The conflict which is here described is, in other passages, portrayed *(for example, Galatians 5:17)* in language which, by common consent, can be applied only to true Christians. There the flesh is said to war against the Spirit, so that we cannot do the things that we would: here the flesh, or the law in the members is said to war against the law in the mind, so as to bring us into captivity to the law of sin. If, therefore, the one passage is descriptive of the experience of a true Christian, so must also the other be."

"The context requires this interpretation. The apostle has been insisting on the necessity of our being free from the law in order to our justification and sanctification. To show that this does not involve any reflection on the law, it was necessary to show why the law is thus inefficient. In order to accomplish this object he explains how the law operates on the depraved heart. It arouses conscience, and it provokes opposition. This is one part of its effect; but not the whole."

"Even when the heart is renewed, the law cannot promote holiness. It presents indeed the form of beauty, and the soul delights in it after the inward man, but it cannot destroy the power of indwelling sin. The Christian must look, therefore, for deliverance not to the law, but to the grace of God in Christ Jesus. It was essential, therefore, to the apostles' object to

show that, even for the Christian, the bondage of the law is not necessary." *(Hodge on Romans, P. 210, 211).*

Victory over sin, then, cannot be achieved by the strength of resolutions, nor by self effort, or any resources within himself. In this extremity he looks away from self utterly, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." This is present victory. The answer to the question in verse 24 will be found in the next chapter, verse 11. But he does not have to wait till he is rid of this body of death to be free from the power of sin. He has that the moment he sees that victory, as well as justification is in Christ Jesus. He comes to the settled conviction that he has two natures. That the old nature cannot be improved and the new needs no improvement.

"So then I of myself with the mind, indeed serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."

"Mind" and "flesh" are here opposed. In every believer, and no one else, there are these two natures, flesh and Spirit, grace and sin. So then "I myself," one and the same person feel both these natures within me. With the one I serve God's law, with the other sin's law.

If the renewed "Mind" acts at all it must do the things that please God; if the flesh acts at all it must sin, because that is its law.

The apostle does not say that the "Mind" is strong enough to overcome "Sin" in his members. Just the reverse. But he has learned of another power that takes up the battle and is more than victorious.

THE JUSTIFIED: THEIR LIFE BY THE HOLY SPIRIT: GOD'S MERCY FOR INDWELLING SIN—8:1-4.

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus."

The careful Bible student need not be reminded that the last clause in this verse of our authorized version should be omitted. It is doubtless borrowed from the 4th verse where it belongs and inserted here because some early copyist did not understand the believer's standing in Christ.

Here Paul sums up all his previous arguments and unfolds not

only our present acceptance in Christ, and the present liberty of the saints, but also their wonderful future glory. Romans 8:1 should be connected especially with Romans 5:18. The apostle has never lost sight of the two Adams. In the former chapter he has told us that "By the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation." This in no way depended on our **walk,** but only on the fact that we were in Adam. So our place of "no condemnation" in no way depends on our walk, but only on the fact that we are in Christ. A clear view of this is the very foundation of abiding peace and victory in our Christian life. *(See Diagram No. 2).*

We are born into a condemned race, because of our connection with the head of the old creation, Adam the first, and we are born again into the place of no condemnation, only because of our connection with the head of the new creation, the Lord Jesus Christ, the last Adam. It is a question of **position** entirely, and not at all of **condition**; it is entirely of grace and therefore the walk has nothing to do with it. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made us free from the law of sin and death."

For the third time the apostle here speaks of the freedom of the Christian from sin; and if we include 6:14 it is the fourth time.

1. Free from the Penalty of Sin, or Justification.

"He that hath died is released from sin" *(Rom. 6:7).*

This refers entirely to the judicial act of God in justifying the believer in Jesus. We are accounted as having died with Christ when He died and therefore the guilt having been met the penalty is cancelled.

2. Free from the Law.

"For sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under law but under grace" *(Rom. 6:14).*

This is closely connected with the preceding point and also with Romans 7:1-4. No one can be a victorious Christian that is in bondage to legalism; and that is the state of about 90 per cent. of all believers.

3. Free from the Bondage of Sin.

"Being then made free from sin, ye became the bond-slaves of righteousness" *(Rom. 6:18).*

This has no reference to the eradication of sin from the believer, but his transfer to a new master, to whom his allegiance now is due. Sin still remains, but is no longer master.

4. **Free from the Power of Sin.**

This is the theme of our present section. Let it be carefully noted that in neither case is there the slightest hint that **sin** itself is eradicated from the believer.

"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the **law of sin,** and the **law of death.**"

What is the meaning of law in this verse? "We take it to be a **phrase by way of paradox,** meaning the institute, or procedure of the Gospel of Grace, it is thus a law in the sense of a "fixed process."—*Bishop Moule.*

We speak of the **law of gravitation,** or the **law of motion,** and we mean by these expressions that a force acting on a body is exerted with regularity and in a constant direction.

By the law of gravitation a body, released falls 16 feet the first second, 48 feet the second second, and so on. No material body is ever free from **gravitation,** but it may be free from its **law.** A book, for example, lies on the table. It lies there because it is held there by gravitation but it does not fall to the earth because the law of gravitation is arrested by the table. I take a book weighing 5 pounds and raise it above my head. It is not free from gravitation for I feel the pull of it toward the earth; but it is free from the law of gravitation because the strength of my muscles is greater than the weight of the book.

"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." That is the all-powerful energy of the Holy Spirit acting in the believer as the giver and sustainer of his life in Christ "hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Not free from sin, notice, but free from its LAW; not free from death, but free from its **law.**

The Christian dies just like the unbeliever as far as the fact of death is concerned. But he does not die like the unbeliever under that condemnation that takes him on to the second death, which is the lake of fire.

The Christian has sin in him like the unsaved man, but he is free from its law, i. e., from its power. Here we are at the very

heart of the secret of victory in the Christian life. We have seen that there are two forces at work in the believer. The "Spirit" and the "Flesh" *(Gal. 5:17)* and that the Spirit of God is stronger than the flesh. The same power that raised Christ from the dead is operating in every believer, and that power is greater than the power of sin in our members and is therefore ample for our deliverance at all times.

It is going to prove greater than death too at that day when Jesus comes and raises the bodies of the dead saints and changes the bodies of the living saints, when mortality is swallowed up of life. "Hath made me free," is expressed in a tense in the Greek (aorist) that means a definite act of deliverance; not a process; and is an echo from chapter 7. The Apostle turns from the plural of the general truth to the singular of his own appropriation of it. So he does in Galatians 2:19, 21. He sees a Power apart from self, taking up the contest and winning out, where he has signally failed. "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me; and that life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me" *(Gal. 2:20)*. There can be nothing else but victory when Christ has full control like that.

"For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfllled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

"Law" here is the moral code, the ten commandments. It can prescribe duty, but can never supply motive. It is powerless to produce holiness. Not on account of any defect in the law. How careful Paul is to always exonerate the law. The weakness is in the instrument through which it operates. The law coming from God is perfect. It is holy and just, and good. It is strong enough in itself to meet every need. But the flesh through which it operates is powerless. I may have a lever of steel amply strong to raise a building, but if my fulcrum is of pasteboard I cannot accomplish the task.

"God sending His own Son." This does not mean that God did not send the law too, for He is as much the author of the

law as He is of grace. But grace can only have its full sway after the law has revealed our need.

"In the likeness of sinful flesh." See how the apostle answers some fearful heresies in his guarded language. The flesh in us is always connected with sin. But he is careful not to say "in sinful flesh" for in Him was no sin. He was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. But neither does he say "in the likeness of flesh," which would mean that the flesh was unreal.

The Son of God took real flesh and it was similar to our flesh in that it was subject to the same needs and temptations as our flesh, but without sin. He enters the very stronghold of sin and comes out victorious and becomes **OUR VICTORY.**

For it is this blessed Christ who was made an offering for sin and through whom sin was punished in His person in our behalf and its claim against us cancelled; that going back to heaven having merited the gift of the Holy Ghost becomes the power working in the believer that is victory over sin. From first to last it comes through faith, not works, not law. "This is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith" *(I John 5:4)*. And so the righteous requirement of the law is fulfilled in us, not by us who are walking not after the flesh but after the Spirit.

THE FLESH AND THE SPIRIT

The flesh as used in Romans means human nature in its fallen state through Adam. It is a state that is always evil, and always opposed to grace. It is the whole man in the unregenerate state. It is still an element in the regenerate person however mature he may be as a Christian; but he is not to be controlled by it, because the dominant element is now not "the flesh," but the quickened human spirit, indwelt, and energized by the Holy Spirit.

The spirit in Romans 8 is sometimes the human spirit now newly created and conformed to the will of God. Sometimes it is the Holy Spirit indwelling the believer and operating through his human spirit. The two act in such harmony now that it is impossible sometimes from the language of the apostle to tell exactly which is meant.

"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit."

Here we have the sharp contrast between the saved and the unsaved. "Do mind" is the same word translated "Set your affection on" in Colossians 3:2. It means more than to like a thing, it means to be thoroughly engrossed with "things on the earth," as contrasted with "things above." The will of the unregenerate is free, of course, but it has its limitations because of the very nature of the unrenewed man.

On the contrary, the regenerate man has been illuminated by the Spirit and is indwelt and controlled by the Spirit in a supernatural way. He has new affections which are set on things above. This is just as free and spontaneous an act in the child of God as the opposite conduct was in his unregenerate state. "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."

Paul is not here comparing one kind of Christian with another. But he is contrasting the unregenerate man with the regenerate man.

There is an essential and unalterable hostility in the person that has not been born again against the True God and His real claims. It is not said that the carnal mind is an enemy of God. That might be rectified. An enemy may be subdued and changed into a friend. But the carnal mind is enmity itself, and for that there is no remedy as far as its attitude is concerned. This old nature is never changed, or improved; but a new Divine nature is implanted in the believer beside it.

The flesh may be very moral and upright, but they that are in the flesh cannot please God. It may be very religious and devoted, but it is flesh just the same. Millions of people that are called Christians are going through all kinds of religious performances; making all kinds of sacrifices, but they are not pleasing God because it is all done in the flesh. What a shocking awaking such people are going to have some day.

"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His."

The Holy Spirit permanently abides in the believer. It is not possible to be saved and not have the Spirit. The apostle is not here speaking of the **temper**, or **disposition** of Christ, but of the personal Holy Spirit who dwelt in Christ and proceeds from Christ to us. An indispensable requisite to union with Christ is the present indwelling of the Holy Spirit. This marks the believer as not in the flesh, but in the Spirit.

"And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness."

Not only does the Holy Spirit dwell in the believer as the Divine illuminator and teacher, but Christ also dwells in him as the Divine Guest. Wonderful mystery as this is, yet it is affirmed many times *(Eph. 3:16; John 14:23; II Cor. 13:5)*. But the body is still dead because of sin. The apostle realizes that he is not yet "delivered from this body of death." Eradication is not Paul's doctrine. He still bears about with him the body of sin. But he has learned the way of victory and can even thank God for the infirmities and necessities of this body; because when he is weak then he is strong. But this body is not going to exist in its present state for ever. The soul has already been redeemed, the spirit has been quickened into life and the redemption of the body is all he is waiting for *(vs. 23)*.

DELIVERANCE FROM THE BODY OF DEATH

It takes just one verse to answer the despairing question of chapter 7:24. And if it is borne in mind that Paul has not yet answered his question as to the manner of deliverance, but only that it is through Jesus Christ our Lord, we will not lose the mighty lesson here by wrongly applying a verse whose meaning is plain and clear as the light. It is entirely foreign to Paul's line of argument here to turn this verse aside to teach Divine healing as some have done.

Read it in the Revised Version:

"But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall give life also to your mortal bodies through His Spirit that dwelleth in you."

When does this take place? When we pray for healing? Surely not. It is the "giving of life" to the body that Paul speaks of

here, and no amount of praying is going to bring about that redemption of the body which must wait till the coming of the Lord. He has just told us in the preceding verse that though Christ is in you the body is still dead because of sin, and it can never have life till that scene is enacted that is pictured in I Corinthians 15:51, etc.

Neither is it the resurrection that the apostle has in view here. He says nothing in this verse about raising dead bodies. A "mortal body" is a body that is living but doomed to die. The apostle never assumes that any Christian would necessarily die before the Lord comes. This is his uniform method in all his epistles. It was revealed to Paul as one of the mysteries hitherto hidden that "we shall not all sleep," and he seems to live in the hope that none of the saints would fall asleep. So he speaks here; the mortal body is to be made **ALIVE.** The word "change" is applicable here. It is never used in connection with regeneration; in that act there is no change of the old nature but the implantation of a new nature. But the body is going to be changed when this mortal puts on immortality. The full statement about this is not found here in Romans, but in I Corinthians 15. But if the two are studied together then all is simple. This mortal body (body of death) is to be transformed in the twinkling of an eye when the Lord comes, then we will be delivered from the presence of sin. Even so come, quickly, Lord Jesus!

"Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

"We are debtors." The apostle starts out as if he were going to lay an obligation upon us in our new relation, but he checks himself by a strong negative. We are debtors, but not to the flesh. We owe absolutely nothing to the flesh. Grace has separated us from that. We owe everything to the Great Giver of the Spirit. But while he means this, he does not say it. He leaves us to infer it. A holy life is absolutely necessary to fulfil our tremendous obligation to grace. When he says, "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die," he does not imply that any child of God could do so; but as in verses 5, 8 he emphasizes the hostility of the **flesh** to God and its end in death.

"If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body."

Here the helplessness of the child of God is plainly implied. It is only through the Spirit that he is a victor at any time. But he has this privilege at all times, because the Spirit is more than a match for the resistance in the body. And every true believer has the Spirit's abiding presence.

This passage and all the parallel passages show how Paul recognized fully the presence of sin still in the believer and also his inability to cope with this enemy. Nor does he ever speak of our helping the Spirit in the warfare. Just as in our salvation we ceased from our works and looked away from ourselves to the crucified Christ; so in temptation we must cease from our efforts and look away to the risen Lord who supplies the Spirit and gives the victory. Then shall we enjoy the life of which the Spirit is the author including holiness, happiness, and eternal glory.

THE SECURITY OF THE JUSTIFIED—8:14-39.

From verse 14-39 of this golden chapter we have the Bible's full statement about the permanency of the believer's position in Christ. It is not our purpose to comment on every verse but only to point out a few of the conspicuous ones, or to suggest some help where the young believer might misunderstand the scope of the passage.

Take for example verse 14. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God." The question naturally arises: "Is every child of God led by the Spirit **all** the time?" To be sure he is. That does not mean that every child of God always **walks** in the Spirit *(Gal. 5:16)*. Happy would he be if he did, for he would then, never, never, fulfil the lusts of the flesh. But the Spirit never **releases** His hold and never departs from the believer.

If I start down the street with an obstinate donkey that I am leading, by a halter; he may try to turn aside at every crossing, and may pull strongly against the halter, but I do not, on that account, release my hold on him. I may give him a jerk occasionally to improve his behavior, but I am still leading him. David throws out a red light of warning to God's people of all generations, when in deep contrition over his own stubbornness,

and remembering the awful chastisements which he had received for his great sin, he writes, "Be ye not as the horse or as the mule, which have no understanding; whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come nigh thee" *(Ps. 32:9)*.

It is much more pleasant to walk in the Spirit; for then there is no friction. But every moment from the new birth, when the Spirit comes in to abide, till we reach the glory, we are led by the Spirit of God.

Then again many young believers are troubled about the

WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." What is meant by the witness of the Spirit? Is it a **feeling** within by which we know we are children of God? Certainly not. It is a very misleading and dangerous doctrine to teach that the witness of the Spirit is a mere feeling.

The Word of God is the testimony of the Spirit. The things that God has had written down in the Scripture concerning our redemption, justification, sonship, and security; these are the witness, or testimony of the Spirit, since they were given by inspiration of the Spirit.

Now when I receive this testimony and my spirit agrees with the Holy Spirit, and I can set my seal to His Word that it is true, then I can with confidence call God, Abba, Father *(Rom. 8:15; John 3:33)*.

There is, of course, a supernatural element here, for no natural man can call God, Father in sincerity and truth. There must be a new creation a renewing of the human spirit, before this can be realized, but the fact remains that the unchanging Word of God and not the variable feelings of the believer is that on which we rely as evidence that we are born of God.

The great passage on this subject is in I John 5:9-13.

The Catholic version is better than ours, as follows:

"If we receive **TESTIMONY** of men, the **TESTIMONY** of God is greater, for this is the **TESTIMONY** of God which is greater, because he hath **TESTIFIED** of His Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the **TESTIMONY** of God in

himself. He that believeth not the Son, maketh Him a liar: because he believeth not in the **TESTIMONY** which God hath testified of His Son.

And this is the **TESTIMONY**, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life. He that hath not the Son hath not life. These things have I written to you, that you may know that you have eternal life, you who believe in the name of the Son of God."

The emphasized words are the same as those translated witness, etc., and it is plain that the way we know we have eternal life is by what God says in His Word and not by the feelings that follow this knowledge. The witness of the Spirit then is an abiding thing with the real child of God; whether he is in joy or pain, in prosperity or adversity that testimony abides.

THE REDEMPTION OF THE BODY

"For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."

Ever since the Fall of Man this earth has shared in the effects of sin. The inanimate earth has produced thorns and briers, and all conscious animate beings have suffered from the primeval subjection till this present age, which is the last before the glorious release.

The Old Testament prophets are full of promises about this coming day.

"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" *(Is. 11:6-9)*.

This is the change the apostle speaks of when he says, "The creation itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." The very

nature of carnivorous animals will be changed. The poison of adders will be taken out of them. The Son of David will establish peace on earth, Satan will be bound, and Christ will control everything.

But equally wonderful will be the change in the children of God themselves. We have already "the firstfruits of the Spirit," i. e., we have that measure of the Spirit which is a pledge and an earnest of the fullness yet coming to us. But we are to have a body "Fashioned like the body of His glory" *(Phil. 3:21)*. It is then "We shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is" *(I John 2:3)*. This is what Paul calls the "adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" *(Rom. 8:23)*.

"Redemption," here means the actual and realized deliverance which will take place at the **change** of the living saints, and the **resurrection** of the dead saints when Jesus comes. The price is already paid at the cross *(Eph. 1:14; 4:30)*, but the liberation is yet to come.

Then we will indeed have a body with sin eradicated. We may walk at liberty now, but then we will be delivered into a **"glorious liberty."**

But meantime we have infirmities and ignorance and need the Spirit's help even to pray intelligently. "For we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." The Spirit carries us entirely above our own selfish desires into the very atmosphere of the will of God and prompts us to pray His own petitions, such as glorify God, and such as He can and will answer.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose."

Each succeeding statement here is a fresh assurance of safety. (1) The sonship of the believer; a relationship that can never be broken *(vss. 16, 17)*. (2) The fact that his sufferings and sorrows are only a prelude to glory *(vss. 18-23)*. (3) The Divine assistance afforded by the Holy Spirit in prayer *(vss. 26, 27)*. Now before the great final appeal we have a statement of the truth that the children of God are the objects of an eternal purpose on God's part that must result in their final blessedness. "All

things work together for good" to accomplish this end. This shows that our Father works out His Divine Decrees through means. Different means, suited to each individual child, adjusted by supreme wisdom only. Children of the same parents on earth, have to be dealt with differently according to the temperament and disposition of each child. So it is with the children of God. But remember, dear reader, that you and I each get just what we need to accomplish the purpose of God in calling us into His family.

This purpose is fully stated in the next verse as follows, "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be **CONFORMED TO THE IMAGE OF HIS SON,** that He might be the firstborn among many brethren."

We can understand then why these sufferings, groanings, afflictions, sorrows, and disappointments. They all have one eternal purpose in view; and that is that we may be conformed to the image of His Son. It is a great mistake to say that every trial a Christian has is an evidence of a lack of faith, or a chastisement for disobedience. Remember our Lord said, "Every branch in Me that beareth fruit He purgeth (pruneth) it that it may bring forth more fruit" *(John 15:2)*.

Paul in that remarkable chapter, II Corinthians 11, gives that long list of sufferings and trials as a positive proof of his apostleship *(vs. 23)*. Surely "God's ways are not our ways, neither His thoughts our thoughts." We were chosen then not merely to escape from doom, but to be made like unto Christ.

The plain words of this passage show that the salvation of every true believer, in the purpose of God, is from eternity to eternity. We cannot see the whole of this "scheme," but we can believe, and wonder, and adore, and worship.

THE FINAL APPEAL AND APPLICATION

"What shall we say then to these things?" Not merely the things mentioned immediately before in chapter 8, but the whole argument of this great Epistle. It is in chapter 3—5 that we find the sacrifice of Christ and our justification. The question really defies analysis. It includes all of God's thoughts and purposes towards us. And "If God be for us, who can be against

us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?"

Will the enemy of our souls spring some surprise on God by revealing to Him some sin, or weakness that God's all-seeing eye had failed to detect? Will our Father be disappointed in us and find us worse than He at first thought we were and will His grace not hold out; so that after all He will not be able to keep us, after so much pains with us? How completely does the apostle answer all such subtle suggestions.

"It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth?" Another reading here which is probably more correct is as follows, "Is it God that justifies? Who is He that condemns?" This is a little stronger, but the meaning is the same. The final Accuser who has the last word, must be God Himself. Will He condemn the soul He has already justified? He is pledged to the very opposite. He justifies the believer in Jesus, as we have so fully seen already not on account of anything in the believer, but on the ground of perfect justice. "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

Now since "all judgment is committed to Him" *(John 5:22)*, and "all power is given to Him in heaven and earth" *(Matt. 28:18)*, and since "He ever lives to make intercession for us" there can be no weak point in our salvation where we can lose it. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? It is the love of Christ for us, not ours for Him. The entire argument is about our security through the goodness and faithfulness of God. Neither our goodness, nor faithfulness are in view at all. We would never be secure if our safety depended upon anything in us.

The things named often seem to us a proof that the Lord has forsaken us. They act like a cloud between us and the face of the Beloved one. Paul assures us that the love is indissoluble.

He names seven things, which is the number of completeness; the same as to say, if these cannot, nothing can. And Paul had a right to speak in this way, for he had experience along all these lines. "Nay in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us."

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It is most interesting to notice that the apostle ends this dogmatic discussion on doctrines by a climactic utterance on love. This shows the vital connection between the truth about God's sovereignty and His grace and love. Even in the thought of **personal** victory Paul does not forget that the source of strength is wholly in Christ.

He ends this section just as he ends each one of the chapters under discussion—5, 6, 7 and 8. Because all our blessings come through **JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD.**

"For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

This includes everything in the universe except the Uncreated One. But it is this very Uncreated One who loved us. There could not be a stronger expression of the absolute security of the child of God.

Let us remember that this same loving Saviour that is pledged to keep us forevermore is also able to give us victory day by day.

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" *(II Cor. 3:18).*

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